

in their existence. "What use does it serve?" is the test by which each is measured; but they who would thus gauge the Almighty's works by a dry utilitarian law, altogether forget that He who, as His noblest work on earth, has created man an intelligent being, endowed with faculties capable of appreciating and deriving enjoyments from the beautiful as well as from the true, is only carrying out His design in clothing the earth with beauty, and peopling hedge-row, and meadow, and heath, with endless varieties of life and form.

"By cooling streams and softening showers,
The vegetable race are fed;
And trees and plants, and herbs and flowers
Their Maker's bounty smiling spread.

"The flow'ry tribes all blooming rise
Above the vain attempts of art;
Their bright inimitable dyes
Speak sweet conviction to the heart."

"Consider the lilies of the field," says our Lord; but it is not to discover into what useful tissues they may be woven, or for what valuable uses they are applicable, but to derive a far higher lesson of benevolence and love, from the glory of their unwoven raiment, and to learn from thence how infinite His power who thus scatters wild and free over the uncultivated face of nature so abundant a garland of beauty for its robe.

"The fruitful tree, the blooming flower,
In varied charms appear;
Their varied charms declare Thy power,
Thy goodness all declare.

"The fragrant, the refreshing breath
In every flow'ry bloom;
In balmy whispers owns from Thee
Its pleasing odours come."

To such as we have spoken of, it might suffice that the earth were one monotonous tract of hemp and grain; that the forest should spring up without a leaf,—the meadow exchange its daisy and cowslip for the ripening hay, and all nature be reduced to a methodic storehouse. It is true that early and constant familiarity has a tendency to render us unobservant of that which surrounds us; but the individual must be idle, and ignorant as idle, whose curiosity cannot be awakened by a description of the wonderful mechanism and adaptations of vegetable life.

"Blessed be God for flowers!
For the bright, gentle, holy thoughts they breathe,
From out their odorous beauty, like a wreath
Of sunshine in life's hours."

The study of plants as a science finds her charms upon the suffrages of society; who is so insensible, so cold to the charms of beauty, grace, odour, tint, and elegance of form, as to disregard the attractions of the vegetable world? Even the